



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

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February 6, 2014

Mr. Jesse Geller, Chair
Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals
333 Washington Street
Brookline, MA 02445

Re: Hancock Village Chapter 40B Development Plan

Dear Chairman Geller,

The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) is charged with advising the Selectmen on affordable housing policies and programs as well as promoting the creation and preservation of housing that is affordable to individuals and families of low and moderate income.

Section 4.08 of the Town's Zoning ByLaw ("Inclusionary Zoning") requires that developers of residential projects having more than fifteen dwelling units provide a designated percentage of units that are affordable to low and moderate income households. The HAB, with support by the Housing Division staff of the Department of Planning and Community Development, reviews all proposed developments that are subject to Inclusionary Zoning requirements to ensure that project plans comply with the specifications and intent of Section 4.08.

The HAB and Housing Division staff have reviewed Chestnut Hill Realty's most recent proposal for a Chapter 40B project at Hancock Village. While the HAB is pleased to note that the developer plans to include units that will be affordable to households having incomes of less than 50% of the area median income, the HAB encourages the ZBA to require the developer's affordable housing component to exceed the minimum affordable units required under the law.

The HAB expects to review and comment upon the details of the proposed project's affordability components including, for example, the size, distribution, and salient features of the designated affordable unit, as well as key provisions of the housing affordability covenants designed to assure permanent affordability.

While the HAB serves as the Town's designated advocate for affordable housing in Brookline, our board has directed its primary concerns, within the larger planning and regulatory review process, to each project's affordable housing component. Accordingly, we encourage the Zoning Board of Appeals, in the course of its reviewing of the proposed Hancock Village project, to seek the HAB's input and recommendations on any conditions relating to this aspect of the development plan at the appropriate time.

The Town of Brookline has engaged in longstanding, creative and fruitful efforts to create, promote, and preserve multi-family and affordable housing—efforts that have been recognized by the Commonwealth. For decades, Brookline has committed significant Town resources—both human and financial--to these efforts and has made measurable progress by creating and preserving over 2,000 units of affordable housing.

We look forward to working with the ZBA, as described above, as your review proceeds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Blood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roger" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Blood".

Roger Blood, Chair
Housing Advisory Board